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SUBJECT: SECURITY COUNCIL WORKING GROUP -- APRIL 29
MEETING: MONUC AND MINUSTAH

REF: STATE 4905

¶1. (SBU) Context: In January 2009 the French and UK circulated a non-paper on the challenges facing UN peacekeeping, with a focus on strategic oversight, matching mandates and resources, setting clear political objectives and establishing benchmarks for progress. The paper was discussed in an informal seminar to which senior UN civilian and military officials were invited, followed by an open debate of the Security Council. This paper launched a collaborative process aimed at an in-depth policy review of UN peacekeeping, to be wrapped up in August, during the UK Presidency of the Security Council. Japan, as chair of the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations, is chairing a series of meetings to review such issues as the gaps between mandates and implementation, best practices, interaction between the Security Council and Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs), and the links between the various stages of a peace process from conflict resolution through peacekeeping to peacebuilding. The April 29 meeting will discuss these thematic issues in the specific context of MONUC and MINUSTAH; subsequent meetings will consider these themes in relation to other field missions. The UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and Department of Field Support (DFS) have launched the "New Horizons Project", a multiphase process which is intended to produce agreement on a set of concrete reforms and strategies, with a goal of incorporating consolidated views into the Secretary-General's report on peacekeeping in November. As part of that project, DPKO has commissioned a paper from an institute at NYU on the major issues facing peacekeeping over the next two to five years which should be completed in the near future; we expect that the conclusions of that paper will be folded into the Security Council review and the August 2009 discussions. USUN may draw on the talking points in paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 for the April 29 meeting.

¶2. (U) Overview:

-- The United States views UN peacekeeping as one of the key tools the Security Council has available for carrying out its responsibilities in matters affecting international peace and security.

-- We recognize the dedication and sacrifice of the more than one hundred thousand people serving in and supporting peacekeeping operations around the world.

-- We welcome this initiative to conduct a serious, in-depth discussion of the interplay of mandates, political will, resources, capability -- the many complex issues that support or undermine success.

-- It is time to review where focused international attention could increase the chances of existing UN missions being successfully concluded and closed. This includes attention to reviving political processes, helping the Secretariat to generate the forces and enablers it needs, and support to host governments in matters of governance and economic recovery.

-- We agree that the Council's review over the next few months should pay particular attention to the largest, most complex and most expensive missions.

-- The United States stresses that the key to this review is to keep the emphasis on "success." We support orderly draw down in relation to measurable and sustainable progress, not arbitrary down-sizing. We have all made substantial investments -- both financial and human -- to support UN peacekeeping operations. Our goal is to measure what is achievable and sustainable, in each unique situation. There cannot be "one size fits all."

-- With regard to future missions, the United States supports efforts by the Council to improve the chances of success by making a realistic assessment of the conditions -- including such key elements as political will and available resources -- and reviewing the full range of options.

-- We look forward to the results of the Secretariat's "New Horizons" project and to recommendations on systematic steps and enhancements.

¶3. (U) MONUC:

-- The Council's efforts in December to clarify MONUC's mandate through prioritization was a positive step forward. MONUC now has a better understanding of the ranking of its mandate and that the protection of civilians is its top priority. We may want to consider a similar approach in other missions/future missions to avoid confusion on the ground and help in planning.

-- We are pleased to see that the Technical Assessment Mission (TAM) and MONUC have initiated work on the development of a strategic work plan with benchmarks. We would be interested in receiving more information on this work plan, including when DPKO expects to have a final product, when it will be shared with the Council, and whether the Council will have an opportunity to comment/help craft the plan.

-- We remain seriously concerned about the delay in the deployment of the additional troops and assets. It is nearly six months since the Council authorized the increase, but the troops have not yet arrived in the DRC to take up their duties. We would like to know when these additional troops and assets will be deployed and what is causing the delay, in particular with regard to secured troops and assets. We would also be interested in knowing whether DPKO is considering any offers for the remaining outstanding air and intelligence assets and military advisors.

¶4. (U) MINUSTAH:

-- Thanks in large part to the efforts of MINUSTAH, Haiti has made significant progress in consolidating security. Given the difficulties the country faced in 2008, however, we understand that progress in some key areas has fallen short of expectations. The Security Council will continue to monitor events on the ground and alongside the Secretary-General will evaluate the timelines set out for meeting these benchmarks.

-- The gains made in the security sector in Haiti are fragile and this progress must now be closely linked to coordination and relief efforts, including implementation of aspects of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and the Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA), and the GOH's New Paradigm paper.

-- Now more than ever, MINUSTAH and the UN Country Team should increase their efforts in strategic coordination, not only focusing on civil and military affairs and development, but also more broadly on a peacebuilding perspective, including an emphasis on social dialogue and political processes. A focus on peacebuilding may also broaden Haiti's donor base, allowing for increased progress in the Mission's benchmarks.

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